# Teachers warn toxic social media influencers fuel misogyny and poor behaviour in schools



Teachers across the UK are raising concerns about the impact of toxic social media influencers on pupils’ behaviour, highlighting a rise in misogyny and sexism within schools. A recent poll conducted by the NASUWT teaching union reveals that nearly three in five teachers believe social media use has contributed to a noticeable decline in student conduct.

The survey findings were shared during the NASUWT’s annual conference held in Liverpool over the Easter weekend. According to the union, social media is identified as the leading factor behind negative behaviour among pupils. Delegates at the conference prepared to debate a motion addressing how far-right and populist groups have increasingly shifted their recruitment efforts onto social media platforms, messaging apps and online gaming environments.

Several respondents to the NASUWT survey specifically pointed to the influence of Andrew Tate, a controversial social media personality, particularly on male students. One teacher recounted an incident involving very young boys who had refused to engage with her as a female educator, instead choosing to communicate only with a male teaching assistant. The teacher said: “They follow Andrew Tate and think he is amazing with all his cars and women and [think this is] how women should be treated. These were 10-year-olds.”

This growing issue has coincided with wider discussions about online safety prompted by the television drama Adolescence, which explores incel culture—a term used to describe involuntary celibates often associated with extremist views. In this context, Patrick Roach, General Secretary of NASUWT, highlighted the urgency of collaborative action to protect children and young people from the harmful influence of far-right populist and extremist narratives.

“There is an urgent need for concerted action involving schools, colleges and other agencies to safeguard all children and young people from the dangerous influence of far-right populists and extremists,” Roach said. He stressed the importance of ensuring school environments remain safe spaces for both learners and staff, adding, “Teachers cannot be left alone to deal with these problems.”

The Department for Education acknowledged the challenges posed by such influences, stating: “We know the rise of dangerous influencers is having a damaging impact on our children, which is why we are supporting the sector in their crucial role building young people’s resilience to extremism as part of our Plan for Change.” This statement underlines ongoing government efforts to bolster educational frameworks aimed at equipping young people with the skills necessary to resist extremist ideologies encountered online.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://gtscholars.org/addressing-social-medias-influence-on-pupils-behaviour-tips-for-schools> - Supports claims about social media's influence on student behavior in UK schools, including strategies for educators to address these challenges.
* <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/students-think-social-media-is-fine-but-teachers-see-a-mental-health-minefield/2024/03> - Corroborates educators' concerns about social media's negative impact on student mental health and behavior, aligning with NASUWT survey findings.
* <https://www.boa-academy.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=4449&type=pdf> - Provides context on professional boundaries for teachers using social media, relevant to discussions about online influences on classroom dynamics.
* <https://www.britishschoolbarcelona.com/blog/the-use-of-social-media-in-education/> - Discusses broader implications of social media in education, including behavioral challenges, which contextualizes claims about toxic influencer impacts.
* <https://journalofpreducation.com/2021/05/28/an-examination-of-student-perceptions-of-teacher-social-media-use-in-the-classroom/> - Examines how social media affects student-teacher dynamics and credibility, supporting claims about behavioral shifts linked to online influences.